

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A water treatment method comprising:

receiving water into a treatment area;

introducing light into said treatment area from a at least one semiconductor laser as said water passes through said treatment area, wherein microorganisms contained within said water are reactive to said light and are killed; and

providing said water from said treatment area to a point of use.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 wherein said treatment area is located within a dental handpiece and said point of use is located after a port formed in a head located at the end of a said dental handpiece and said treatment area whereby water exits said dental handpiece and enters a patient's mouth.

Claim 3 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said point of use is after a treatment area located near the head of a dental handpiece.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 wherein said treatment area is a treatment area wherein water and ultraviolet light converge.

Claim 5 (original): The method of claim 2 wherein said point of use is located after a head of the dental handpiece.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The method of claim 2 wherein said laser beam is controlled by a switching mechanism located ~~in~~on said dental handpiece.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 wherein said treatment area is located ~~near~~ at said point of use.

Claim 8 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said treatment area is located within a dental handpiece.

Claim 9 (cancelled)

Claim 10 (currently amended): A water treatment system, comprising:

a treatment area further comprising an entry point for receiving water from input tubing connected to the input portion of said treatment area and an exit point for providing water passing through said treatment area to a point of use; and

~~a laser light source~~ at least one semiconductor laser coupled to said treatment area for delivery of light into said treatment area;

wherein microorganisms are sensitive to light from said ~~a laser light source~~ at least one semiconductor laser and are killed as said light penetrates and treats water flowing through said treatment area.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The method of claim 10 wherein said treatment area is located with and coupled to at least one of a water fountain, a kitchen sink, and/or rinsing equipment in an industrial process ~~near said point of use of said water treatment system.~~

Claim 12 (original): The water treatment system of claim 10 wherein said treatment area is located near a distal end of a dental handpiece.

Claim 13 (original): The water treatment system of claim 12 further comprising a head removably connectable to said dental handpiece at said exit point of said treatment area, said head for providing said water to said point of use.

Claim 14 (original): The system of claim 13, further comprising a beam directing mechanism for directing light between a light exit port and said treatment area, whereby laser light can also be directed into the an area within a patient's mouth.

Claim 15 (original): The system of claim 14 wherein said beam directing mechanism is a laser switching mechanism.

Claim 16 (original): The system of claim 14 wherein said beam directing mechanism is a laser splitter.

Claim 17 (original): A dental handpiece including a water line for providing water into a treatment area from a port formed in a head associated with the dental handpiece, said dental handpiece comprising:

- a laser light source integrated within a dental handpiece housing, said laser light source for providing light from a laser to a water treatment area located near said head of said dental handpiece;

- a water treatment area located near said head of said dental handpiece including a entry point for accepting water from a water source into said treatment area, and including an exit point for allowing water to pass from the treatment area toward a point of use through said head.

Claim 18 (original): The dental handpiece of claim 17 wherein said treatment area is a junction box integrated within said dental handpiece and coupled to waterline tubing also integrated within said dental handpiece for providing water from a water source into said junction box near said head, wherein water is allowed to exit through said port after treatment by light within said junction box.

Claim 19 (original): The dental handpiece of claim 18, wherein said laser light source includes fiber optic cable optically coupled to said junction box , wherein said fiber is coupled such that a window is formed at said junction box through which light is allowed to penetrate and treat water flowing through said treatment area and towards said point of use.

Claim 20 (original): The dental handpiece of claim 17 wherein said water treatment area is a location formed by coupling fiber optic cable with waterline tubing near said head, wherein said fiber optic cable is optically integrated with said tubing causing a window through which light is allowed to penetrate and treat water flowing through said waterline tubing at said treatment area, and thereafter said water flows to said point of use.

Claim 21 (newly added): The method of claim 1 wherein said treatment area is located with and coupled to at least one of a water fountain, a kitchen sink, and/or rinsing equipment in an industrial process.